

**ABSTRACT**

A variable rate transmission system where a packet of variable rate data is transmitted on a traffic channel if the capacity of the traffic channel is greater than or equal to the data rate of the packet. When the rate of the packet of variable rate data exceeds the capacity of the traffic channel, the packet is transmitted on a traffic channel and at least one overflow channel. Also described is a receiving system for receiving and reassembling the data transmitted on the traffic channel and at least one additional overflow channel.